

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 3101

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, UY
SUBJ: TRAVEL OF FOREIGN MINISTER FOLLE MARTINEZ

1. DURING MEETING WITH FONMIN FOLLE MARTINEZ TODAY (SEPT. 13), HE INFORMED ME OF INTEREST IN VISITING WASHINGTON DURING UNGA TO MEET WITH USG OFFICIALS. PRIMARILY, HE IS INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH YOU TO BEGIN A PERSONAL DIALOGUE AND TO DISCUSS THE PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. ON THE LATTER, HE WILL FOCUS ON THE ACTIONS THE GOU WILL BE TAKING IN THE IMMEDIATE MONTHS AHEAD TO REPAIR ITS FRAYED INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. HE INDICATED--FOR EXAMPLE--THAT THE GOU WILL SOON RE-ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS. THIS WOULD BE A POSITIVE FORWARD STEP, ONE WHICH WE HAVE BEEN URGING THEM TO TAKE. I RECOMMENDED THAT HE LOOK INTO SOME OF THE MORE DRAMATIC PRISONER CASES WHICH HAVE PROVOKED INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS SUCH AS THE DE VARGAS SACCONI CASE AND THAT OF MIGUEL ESTRELLA, AND ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE GOU TO GRANT EARLY RELEASE. I ALSO SUGGESTED THAT HE (FOLLE) BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS POSSIBLE INQUIRIES ABOUT THE RECENT ARRESTS OF PCU AND PCU YOUTH MEMBERS. WE HAVE LEARNED 30 TO 40 MEMBERS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN THE LAST WEEKS OF AUGUST AND THE EARLY PART OF THIS MONTH. ALL ARE BEING HELD
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INCOMMUNICADO, AS IS CUSTOMARY UNDER CURRENT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES. FOLLE MAY BRING UP THESE CASES DURING YOUR DISCUSSIONS.

2. FOLLE IS A REASONABLE AND MODERATE INDIVIDUAL WHO RECOGNIZES THAT ONLY CONCRETE ACTS WILL CONVINCE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS ARE

IMPROVING HERE. BUT HEARING IT FROM YOU AND REPORTING IT BACK MAY HELP BREAK THE CURRENT DECISION-MAKING LOG JAM HERE. AN IN-HOUSE GROUP OF RESPECTED ADVISORS HAS RECOMMENDED TO THE MODERATES IN THE MILITARY THAT, FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL REASONS, THEY SHOULD GRANT FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND ASSEMBLY, LIFT THE BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY IMPOSED AGAINST FORMER POLITICIANS, END THE STATE OF SEIGE AND REESTABLISH HABEAS CORPUS. THE MILITARY COMMANDERS REPORTEDLY HAVE AGREED. THE ONLY QUESTION IS ONE OF TIMING, WITH THE MORE CAUTIOUS ELEMENTS ARGUING FOR DELAY. FOLLE SHOULD BE URGED TO RECOMMEND EARLY IMPLEMENTATION AS THE BEST MEANS TO IMPROVE URUGUAY'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AND, IN THE PROCESS, OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

3. FOLLE IS ALSO INTERESTED IN MEETINGS WITH PATT DERIAN AND BOB PASTOR, AND ANY OTHERS IN THE USG YOU WOULD RECOMMEND. HE WOULD LIKE ALSO TO RENEW HIS CONTACT WITH CLAUS RUSER. IF A CALL ON DANTE FASCELL IS FEASIBLE, THIS LATE IN THE THE SESSION, IT WOULD BE USEFUL. FORMER FONMIN ROVIRA LEFT A VERY BAD IMPRESSION ON DANTE WHEN HE CALLED ON HIM DURING THE LAST UNGA PERIOD. FOLLE IS A DIFFERENT BREED.

4. FOLLE ALSO INDICATED A VERY STRONG INTEREST IN MAKING A COURTESY CALL ON THE SECRETARY. I TOLD HIM THAT THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE WOULD BE VERY FULL IN NEW YORK AND THAT HIS
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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE WAS EQUALLY TIGHT. HE UNDERSTOOD BUT CLEARLY WANTS TO RETURN AND BE ABLE TO SAY THAT HE MET WITH THE SECRETARY, NO MATTER HOW BRIEFLY. IF A SHORT CALL ON THE SECRETARY COULD BE ARRANGED, EITHER IN NEW YORK OR IN WASHINGTON, IT WOULD HELP. FAILING THAT, PERHAPS THE SECRETARY COULD CALL HIM ASIDE AT THE UNGA FOR A BRIEF CHAT DURING WHICH HE ALSO COULD ENCOURAGE FOLLE TO URGE THE GOU LEADERSHIP TO TAKE EARLY STEPS TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. HIS DEPARTURE PLANS ARE NOT FIRM (EITHER SATURDAY OR SUNDAY). HE EXPECTS TO BE IN NEW YORK FROM SEPT. 18 THROUGH 21. HE WILL VISIT WASHINGTON SEPT. 21-23; THEN RETURN TO NEW YORK AND REMAIN THERE DURING THE WEEK OF SEPT. 25. HE PLANS TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON OCT. 2 TO 4. HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH THROUGH AMBASSADOR PEREZ CALDAS TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH YOU.
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